DUELLING:

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A POEM.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

THIS POEM,

ON

DUELLING,

IS,

HUMBLY DEDICATED,

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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DUELLING,

A POEM.

IN former times, when evil was withſtood,
And all was centred, in the Public Good,
Each citizen, in virtue firm, was bold,
Nor barter'd probity, for ſhining gold;
Bold their expreſſion, nervous, juſt, and free,
The certain mark of Godlike Liberty,
By her inſpir'd, and great in her defence,
Words us'd, in ſuch debates, ne'er gave offence;

The

The contradiction ſtrong, or ſtern reply,
With fierce emotion of the vivid eye,
Did not in ranc'rous Duel urge the brave,
Nor hurry merit to a ſudden grave.
They greatly ſcorn'd, to draw the ſword in ſpite,
Or wound their Country by the ſhameful fight.

No Duels then were known, except in war,
By chance two chiefs, encount'red from the car,
Or meeting, hand to hand, their proweſs try'd,
While one exulted, as the other dy'd;
'Tis battle, only, Duels can defend,
Valour it's riſe, as conqueſt is the end.
The king, or gen'ral ſlain, the ſpoils were plac'd
In Public view, with ev'ry honor grac'd.
How great their praiſe, who honors did beſtow,
On him, who ſav'd his fellow from the foe!

The

The Civic crown adorn'd his manly brow,
Grac'd him on theatres, or at the plough.
In Greece, enlighten'd, were no Duels known,
In Rome no combats, ſuch as theſe, were ſhown,
'Till Ignorance and arms, theſe realms o'er-run,
And Science baniſh'd, by the ſavage Hun;
When reaſon from deciſions was debarr'd,
Amidſt the din of arms, her cry not heard,
When order was o'erthrown, when Wiſdom fell,
Duel aroſe, the offspring true of Hell.

Law ceas'd, th' unhappy, under conqueſt's ſway
Had no reſource, but wretched to obey;
The conquerors unbounded in their will,
Suppoſing inſult, did deſpoil and kill:
Daily encroaching on each other's right,
Determin'd property, by doubtful fight;

Thus

Thus, what at firſt, in ignorance began,
Became eſtabliſh'd as a legal plan.

O Ignorance, thou ancient monkiſh ſhield,
Thou mighty buckler of the ſhining field;
Theſe multitudes, in cloſe battalia ſee,
Bleeding they fall, for curſed tyranny.
Did a ſmall ſpark of Wiſdom, but diſplay,
On minds benighted, an enliv'ning ray,
Would Romiſh legends, or ſuch idle tales,
Of rotten jaw bones, or St. Gregory's nails
Our minds infect? and ſhamefully infix
The firm perſuaſion, of ſuch juggling tricks?

Wiſdom! to thee I call, the Goddeſs flies,
And deaf to folly, ſcorns my mournful cries;

Can

Can thoſe (I think I hear her ſay) expect,
My aid who treat my rules with high neglect?
Can ſuch deſerve aſſiſtance, who diſown,
Their Maker's dictates, ſpeaking from his throne?
Mortals ſhould tremble, with exceſs of awe,
God never deviates from Nature's law.
By Ignorance, and holy Folly led,
The ſad effects of a diſtemper'd head,
Duels were firſt ordain'd; could they explain
More, than the ſtrength of arm, or feeble brain?
When by ſucceſs, each innocent was prov'd,
And valour fierce, determin'd private good;
The guilty oft eſcap'd, the good oppreſs'd,
Or baniſh'd, while the villain was careſs'd:
Yet ſhame to learning, Duels ſtill remain,
In ſpite of knowledge, or conviction's train:

And tho' expell'd the law, our bravoes dare
To urge this hateful, this deteſted war.

When Rome, deſigning Rome, expreſs'd her fears,
For holy Paleſtine, in artful tears;
Then fi'ry zealots preach'd and ſudden gave,
Infectious inſpiration to the brave;
Then Folly in extreme, each mind o'er ran
And wicked, ſtupid, baſe croiſades began.
Arms, and the practice of continu'd wrong,
Upheld the baſe endeavours; whilſt the ſtrong,
Or weak, by turns oppreſſing and oppreſt,
Each tender feeling baniſh'd from the breaſt,
O'erwhelm'd the Eaſtern world, then horror ſhed
Her baneful influence, on each wretched head.
Soldiers inur'd in blood, could not refrain,
From violence, in Janus peaceful reign;

Habits are ſecond nature; thus we find,
That cuſtoms vicious, ſooneſt taint the mind:
Thus what, in holy frenzy, firſt began,
In Duels ended, and diſgrac'd the man,
Falſe honor lent it's aid, and rage conjoin'd
It's force to overpower the ſtrength of mind;
Then Duels happen from miſtaken deeds,
The injur'd falls, the innocent oft bleeds;
The cauſe of quarrels, ſcarcely worth a ſtraw,
A Lady's beauty or a point of law.

Tho' both conceive they're wrong, yet each diſdains,
To own his error, by defect of brains
His fury is increas'd, the challenge given,
Nor fears the anger of offended heav'n.
" Is man infallible? is it diſgrace,
" To want the beauties of another's face?

" Men's

" Men's underſtanding differs full as much,
" As rough and poliſh'd, differ to the touch;
" If ſo, why not acknowledge when ye're wrong,
" Such candor would o'ercome, not feuds prolong.

When Satan to beguile our parent try'd,
He was attended, by his offspring Pride,
In ſoft perſwaſion, ſeaſon'd high with art,
The venom ſunk and feſter'd in her heart,
From her to us convey'd, the poiſon ſpreads,
And Pride is ever ſeen where Folly treads;
The old deceiver, ſtill as proud, as vain,
Delights to hold us, in his tyrant chain,
And as at firſt perſuades, with ſtale pretence,
And murders judgment, in confounding ſenſe.
" Ye guilty breakers of another's peace,
" Forbear ſuch madneſs, and your baſeneſs ceaſe,

" Or

" Or if by rage impell'd, the huſband dares,
" Or tender father, wrong by filial cares,
" To call thee to the field, on no pretence
" Add murder to the former violence,
" Thou the aggreſſor art; his ſtreaming blood
" Demands the vengeance both of man and God.

See gallant Shrewſb'ry jealous of a name,
Encounter Villiers for th' unworthy dame—
The huſband falls: to her the murd'rer flies
Whilſt the warm blood the fatal ſword bedyes;
Carreſſing and carreſs'd, new joys invent
To baniſh ſorrow and inſure content;
But all in vain: the monitor within,
Pall'd every pleaſure, magnify'd the ſin;

'Till to each ether loathſome they appear,
And part with pleaſure, as they liv'd in fear.

As murder firſt aroſe by Satan's means,
So Duelling, tho' he the falſhood ſcreens
By names or reaſons wrongly underſtood,
But fully open to the wiſe and good.
" My honor's hurt, cries Marcus, ſhall he dare,
" To wound my fame, and not my vengeance fear:
" Here boy take this, invite him to the field,
" There I'll oblige him to recant or yield.
" Suppoſe he will not fight? will that prove ought
" But fear in him, in thee thy want of thought?
" The charge will ſtill remain to public view.
" But is the accuſation falſe or true?

" If

" If true amend, if falſe the tale deſpiſe;

" Virtue will ſhine in ſpite of calumnies.

Bellario rages for attempts, to gain
His miſtreſs, and excites each one's diſdain;
Fiercely demands why ſuch injurious deeds?
In folly murders, or by Folly bleeds.
When the next comer, claſping to her breaſt,
She makes the fighting fools her ſtanding jeſt.
Can honor here reſide? can filth diſpenſe
Neatneſs to form, to beauty elegance?
The wily gameſter careful in the chance,
From bad to worſe does gradu'lly advance;
Suſpecting and ſuſpected, now aſſays
Each mode of profit by deceitful ways:

Detected

Detected foams, nor doubts to give the lie,
To what he calls the fouleſt calumny;
With hand uplifted braves his hated foe,
And ſeems determin'd on the fatal blow.

Can honour in ſuch places e'er be known?
Where Fraud diſguis'd rules on her ſtately throne,
Where nobles meet, to ruin and betray,
And ſhow they're worthleſs by deceitful play.
True honor cannot be in ſuch a place
Whoſe air's contagion, and a ſeat diſgrace.
O ye, who never think, with honour play,
Learn to revere the laws, their pow'r obey;
Let rules divine and human awe your mind,
And be by gentleneſs alone confin'd;

Forbear

Forbear your murders, your raſh Duels ceaſe,
Nor thus your vile enormities increaſe.

Oh! heavenly emanation from above,
Wiſdom deſcend, inſpire us with thy love!
By thee inſpir'd, Pride lowring ſhall retire,
And fooliſh madneſs feel deſerved ire;
Rage ſhall be baniſh'd, Duels then ſhall ceaſe,
The ways of wiſdom are the paths of peace.

THE END.

Forbear your murders, your rash Duels cease,
Nor thus your vile enormities increase.

Oh! heavenly emanation from above,
Wisdom descend, inspire us with thy love!
By thee inspir'd, Pride lowring shall retire,
And foolish madness feel defeated fire;
Rage shall be banish'd, Duels then shall cease,
The ways of wisdom are the paths of peace.

THE END.